



Buzzwords ...

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..... the newsletter for National Beekeepers' Association members

Buzzwords Number 2

What's in this issue -

- * *Reporting of disease ...*
- * *Executive meeting report ...*
- * *1080 and you ...*
- * *'Profiling' the industry ...*

ARE YOU ON THE LEVEL ABOUT YOUR DISEASE LEVELS?

The NBA Executive have expressed concern at what appears to be an increasing trend towards misreporting true BL levels by beekeepers over the past year. This was an item of discussion at the September exec meeting in Wellington, where several cases were reported of either deliberate failure to report disease, or ignorance of the problem due to inexperience. This was causing major problems for neighbouring beekeepers, particularly in some pollination areas where disease levels have risen sharply this spring.

If this practice is widespread, for whatever reason, it is a very disturbing and dangerous situation for our industry said NBA President, Allen McCaw after the meeting.

If true disease levels are not revealed, then our case for support for inspection programmes is seriously weakened. We cannot argue against official figures that show disease levels to be normal, at a time when the inspection programme has been severely reduced because of withdrawal of Government funds.

The President stated that because the question of a funding system from the industry for the disease surveillance system has not yet been finalised, then much of the hive inspection work this year will have to be done on a voluntary basis. Individual beekeepers and branches will need to be even more vigilant than ever, and prepared to cooperate closely with their MAF AAO to ensure that valuable inspection time is not wasted.

Under the Apiaries Act at present, the MAF are obliged to respond to the reporting of disease, Allen McCaw said, but they are not obliged to carry out random disease inspections as they have done in the past. Indeed, the AAOs are under budgetary restraints which do not allow for this work to be done, but they can and do, act upon reports of disease outbreak.

Beekeepers who hide their disease, or simply fail to report the true incidence, are doing themselves and other beekeepers a great disservice.

Only with accurate information can MAF and the NBA have any hope of convincing Government of the real need for financial support for an inspection system.

So if you detect disease in your hives report it immediately. After all, it is your obligation to do so under the Apiaries Act, so lets all BEE LEGAL this season.

EXECUTIVE MEETING

In this issue of Buzzwords I've outlined several topics that exec are considering on your behalf, like the new 1080 poisoning programme and disease inspection funding.

At their September meeting exec also:

- * Met with two officials from the Department of Conservation (DOC) concerning resource rentals for apiary sites.

- * Responded to Landcorp about apiaries on Landcorp property.

- * Discussed changes to the Hive Levy Act with staff of MAF's legal section.

1080 AND YOU

There are some changes afoot in New Zealand's 1080 poisoning programme for possum control. Your NBA executive and MAF have been working together with the Agricultural Pest Destruction Council (APDC) to ensure that beekeepers interests are considered.

More 1080 poisoning will be done in future, and more beekeepers will be affected. Bovine TB is an increasing threat to livestock industries.

The past policy was to blitz certain target areas every 3-5 years with 1080 paste and pellets. More toxic paste was buried after 24-36 hours.

Now all problem areas will be hit every year, and special areas that are attractive to possums (such as willow belts) will also be poisoned. 1080 will be put in willow breaks during bud break and will remain over flowering - for 2-3 weeks or until they receive 50 mm of rain.

Some of these willow areas are very much sought after by beekeepers, but they will be forced to move out by local pest destruction boards. The boards governing body, the APDC, has a legal opinion that beekeepers are occupiers of the land on which their hives are placed, and as such can be asked to move their livestock. This is a grey area which would need to be tested in court, as livestock is not defined in the relevant act.

In any case beekeepers refusing to move hives to allow poisoning would antagonize farmers and probably lose their apiary sites. Farmers pay a levy to the APDC of \$2.50 per cattle beast killed and don't want this money to be wasted.

So for the meantime the message is:

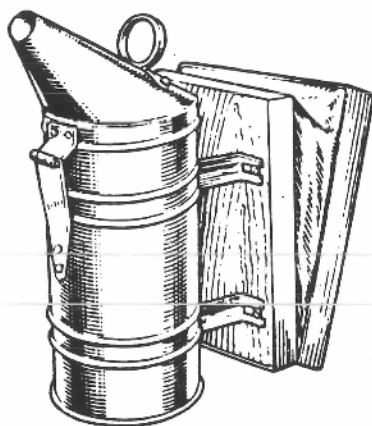
- * Get in touch with your local pest destruction board, and establish communications between them and your NBA branch. Have an officer talk to your next branch meeting or field day.

- * Ensure that all your apiaries are registered with MAF, so you can be contacted if a poisoning programme is to start. Remember that each location must be described by land occupier or owners name, road, district, and any other information that will help it to be plotted on a map.

And for the future? The APDC have agreed to supply the NBA with copies of all plans for 1080 programmes well

in advance of the time of application. MAFs Apicultural Research Units at Ruakura and Invermay are endeavouring to develop a repellent which could be added to 1080 baits, and would allow poison to be laid near hives without risking bee mortality. Preliminary results are promising - watch this space.

(Murray Reid, MAF, Hamilton)



PROFILING YOUR INDUSTRY

Hot off the press is a new booklet called New Zealand beekeeping - an industry profile. It was written by Andrew Matheson and Nick Wallingford on behalf of the NBA executive.

This booklet is a digest of information about the industry, for people who deal with it but don't know much about it.

At the moment exec is distributing the profile, which will be going to all MPs, quite a few government departments, rural reporters from radio, TV and print media, libraries and educational institutions. Some copies will be distributed to NBA branches, with suggestions on their use. These should be targeted to influential people in local farming and fruitgrowing associations, and local authorities. Follow up the distribution of the profile by approaching local reporters and offering background stories.

BRANCH EVENTS

South-western Districts NBA branch (Southern North Island) is having a field day on Saturday 8 October, starting at 10 am. All are welcome to this, which will include a demonstration of the Australian Mantis lifter and discussion on spring work. Bring your lunch. Location: Youngs Coastal Apiaries, Upper Wairau Road, Oakura (that's 10 minutes west of New Plymouth on the coastal road).

FEEDBACK

Well thanks to those who have let me know how *Buzzwords* looks. The feedback has all been positive, so it's good to hear that the newsletter is working for some people.

I'd like to hear from you, with suggestions for improvement or material to include in future issues. We're looking at ways of improving the layout and appearance without going to much extra cost.

And by the way, did you get the Japanese edition of the first issue? No, it wasn't in funny characters, but it was laid out for Japanese beekeepers who start their newspapers on the back page. This issue is for Kiwis.

CONFERENCE 1990

No that's not next year, but is still only about 20 months away. The Cook Islands Beekeeping Association has invited the NBA to stage the 1990 conference in Rarotonga. They would endeavour to arrange a cheap venue or accommodation. Current 8 day/7 night packages including airfares, accommodation, transfers and a tour cost \$799.

Sound a nice idea? Well there are problems - the expense of funding the attendance of delegates and executive members would set the NBA coffers back a bit. It's probably also a constitutional requirement to have an AGM in a place accessible to members - ie in New Zealand. And of course not a lot of beekeepers are thinking about overseas trips at the moment.

Executive want to know what you think. Voice your opinion to your nearest exec member. Discuss it at a branch meeting and write to exec with your ideas. The exec wants to respond to members' opinions on this one.

CYCLONE BOLA RELIEF

There have been some offers of replacement nucs for those East Coast beekeepers who lost hives in Cyclone Bola. Most assistance has come from hobbyist beekeepers rather than commercial members.

Those wishing to help should co-ordinate their efforts through their branch secretary, who can liaise with MAFs Apicultural Advisers in Tauranga (Andrew Matheson) or Palmerston North (Ted Roberts).

QUEENS TO THE USA

Its been a long time coming. It took about six years of investigation and negotiation by MAFs apicultural unit and New Zealands overseas trade commissioners. It is permission to export our queen bees to the USA.

When we first saw potential to send queens to the US we were met with a blanket refusal, because of the 1922 ban on all imports except from Canada. And no, they wouldnt let us export bees to that country for reshipment south of the border.

We started to negotiate on the basis of our clean bill of health and comprehensive MAF disease control and audit programme. Dr Shimanuki of the USDA was brought out and shown around the country, and later Murray Reid of MAF visited USDA staff to negotiate. MAF funded both of these visits, with the help of the beekeeping industry for the latter.

There have been New Zealand queens and packages sent to the USDAs Beltsville lab for tests, and an endless series of negotiations on access to the USA (as well as transshipping rights for bees going to Canada and other countries).

Well, the final result is that New Zealand exporters can now apply for permits to move bees into the US. But remember, behind that simple yes decision lies a lot of hard graft in the background by MAF.

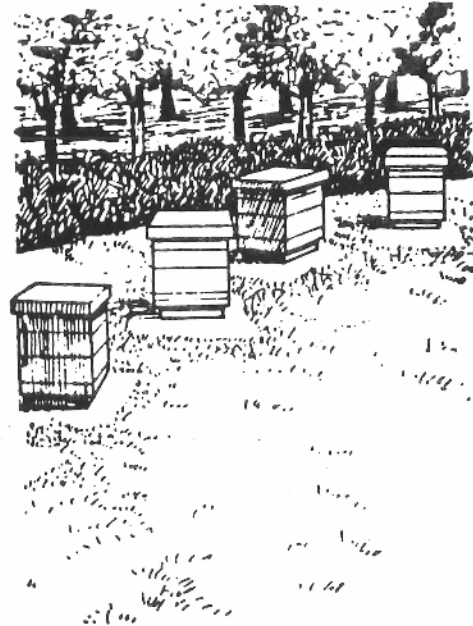


MORE ON BEE STAMPS

In the last issue I reported that its too late to get a bee stamp issued for next years 150th anniversary of beekeeping in New Zealand.

I see that a bee stamp was issued in the USA last month, featuring a bright and colourful picture of a worker honey bee on a clover flower. The stamps value is 25c, which makes me wonder about postage rates there.

The 1988 honey bee stamp follows on from a 1980, 15c stamp depicting a bee on orange blossom.



LOCAL MARKET PRICES

Heres one you might find hard to believe if youre trying to sell you honey on the local market at present. The Statistics Departments monthly report of New Zealand retail prices of selected food items (weighted average) indicates that the retail cost of a 500 gram pot of honey was holding steady at \$1.93 in August 1988, having risen 0.5% from June to July.

This survey cannot have included many of the low-priced honey spreads being offered through major supermarket chains. \$1.93 retail would indicate a bulk honey price of about \$1.50 per kilogram to the beekeeper.

Very few will have received that level of payment this season. The question to be asked is - who has been making the profits this year on the domestic honey market?